

# Holme Valley Parish Council

## MINUTES OF THE PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 05 DECEMBER 2007 -

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr J M Greenwood

Councillors : Cllr Mrs R Bratt, Cllr T W Dixon, Cllr C M Kaye, Cllr Mrs B E Smith, Cllr B A Smith

Officers : Mrs MA Bewick

### **Apologies for Absence**

An apology for her late arrival was accepted from Cllr. Mrs. B.E. Smith.

Cllr. Kaye was present in his ex-officio capacity as Chairman of the Council.

### **07 33 Appointment of Chairman**

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cllr. J. M. Greenwood be appointed Chairman of the Publications and Communications Committee until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

### **07 34 Admission of Public**

RESOLVED: That item 6 of the Agenda be taken in private session as this will involve consideration of quotations.

### **07 35 Disclosure of Interests**

None were given.

### **07 36 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2007 numbered 07 25 - 07 32 inclusive be received and adopted as a true record of the meeting.

### **07 37 Exclusion of Press**

RESOLVED: That the business of the Committee now to be transacted be not open to the public and press on the grounds that the matters to be discussed are of a confidential nature.

### **07 38 Publications and Communications**

(1) Members considered quotations obtained at the request of the Committee regarding various options for producing the Council's quarterly newsletter, externally and in house. On examination and discussion it was felt that the in-house option was not feasible as it was far too costly both in physical and actual terms.

Quotations from two printers were then considered; a third was still awaited, but from the two available, it was

RESOLVED: (1) That the Clerk should bring back to the Committee information from the third quotation if it proved competitive based on the above

(2) That, if this does not prove to be the case, with effect from April 2008, the Council should be recommended to enter into a year's contract with the current printer, using the current format and the quality of paper, at the price quoted; if at all possible, the Clerk to negotiate for this price to be maintained for the full year.

(2) Distribution costs and options - It was reported that it was now no longer possible to enter into a year's contract with Royal Mail which had helped to reduce costs as the price was based on quantity and weight. As it was now only possible to have a contract covering three months, the Council's distribution dates did not readily permit this. It would be necessary to enter into separate contracts for the different deliveries unless it was occasionally feasible to include two deliveries within a three month period. This

## Holme Valley Parish Council

new condition from Royal Mail increased the price overall.

Members discussed this information but as it was the Council's objective to continue with a quarterly newsletter delivered to every household, it was felt that there was no option but to continue to use Royal Mail's services. Other options would be kept under review for the future. Members had already been consulted about this for forthcoming distributions.

RESOLVED: (1) That the action taken to reserve delivery dates for the next two issues be confirmed  
(2) That, for the next year, the Clerk be authorised to enter into appropriate contracts with Royal Mail on a rolling basis.

(3) Budget policy - 2008-09: Although it had been hoped to reduce future costs, the thorough review reported above had indicated that current costs were competitive. Savings had been made on the current year's budget, however, in terms of previous decisions about website hosting and the contribution received from FirstBus towards the newsletter which would contribute to the balances to be carried forward.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be asked to draw up the budget for 2008-9 based on the above decisions and indicated costs.

### **07 39 Re-adminittance of Public and Press**

RESOLVED: That the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting (none were present).

### **07 40 Parish Website**

- Website developments - The Website Editor, Cllr. Mrs. Bratt sought guidance from Members on changes to the website as follows:

(i) Contact us option - agreed to activate this form on website on a trial basis and to monitor results; Members of Committee to test use of this option once activated.

(ii) Site map - with the change of website provider, the previous site map was proving less easy to navigate. Several options were suggested, and it was agreed that a structural map of the site be created, which would be easy to use in conjunction with the search facility.

(iii) Search facility - this facility was now no longer available with the change of website provider; options were put forward, and it was agreed that use of a free Google tool should be installed to provide such a search facility; it was also accepted that this would mean the inclusion of the Google logo on the page, but it was felt that this was not seen an advertisement for the company, but generally accepted as part of the Google search facility. As the Parish Council was a tier of local government, use of this facility would not include other advertisements.

(iv) Online polling facility - the current online polling facility was a simple system but very cost effective and it was felt that this should be retained and used for the benefit of the Council's plans overall. Multiple polls were feasible by paying for multiple accounts, but this was not felt to be a necessary option at the moment.

It was also agreed that an article should be included in a future newsletter to alert people to the online polls which appeared on the website to encourage a greater use and to facilitate future consultation. It was also suggested that the Council's website address should be printed across the strapline of the Council's newsletter, to give it greater prominence.

(v) Link to external site: following attendance at a Conference, Cllr. Mrs. B.E. Smith reported on a useful website; it was agreed to provide a link to this site from the Council's website and to check that there was a corresponding link from that site.

(v) Period of retention of documents on the Website - Following an Access to Information request received by the Council, the question of how long documents and, in particular, newsletters and news articles, should remain on the website had arisen. Following discussion, it was agreed that there should be a two year rolling retention period for newsletters and news articles on the website, with previous copies available only by request to the Office. It was also suggested that these be removed from the current computer records on the same basis, and an archive copy retained on CD.

RESOLVED: (1) That the actions as indicated above be approved and authorised for activation

## Holme Valley Parish Council

(2) That Cllr. Mrs. Bratt be thanked for all the hard work that she undertakes in connection with the Council's newsletters and website which is greatly appreciated by the Council.

### **07 41 Quarterly Newsletter**

(1) Content for the next two editions of newsletter:

RESOLVED: That the content of the Winter 07-08 newsletter, as circulated be approved with the addition of some further information about the forthcoming bus services changes.

RESOLVED: That the possible content for the Spring 2008 edition be as follows, and that the final version be approved by electronic circulation as previously:

Update on War Memorial refurbishments - Cllr. Mrs. Bratt and Deputy Clerk

Impact of changes to Bus Services - to be agreed

Budget 2008-09 - Chairman and Clerk

Website - Chairman

New Councillors - Cllr. Greenwood, Cllr. B.A. Smith

Staffing Changes - Clerk

Deadline for copy to Editor - noon, 25 February 2008

Deadline for copy to Printer - 10 March 2008.

(2) Cllr. Kaye initiated a discussion on concerns being expressed by residents about the demise of the Holme Valley Express and whether this was an area in which the Council should be involved. He felt that ideas should be explored of how communities could be provided with better local information about events and activities in their areas.

There was no wish to replicate or replace existing local publications, but it was felt that this idea could be explored further and opinion canvassed via the newsletter. It was also suggested that the provision of community webspace should be explored with the idea of offering webspace which would be controlled locally by the community. Members were asked to collect examples of existing local publications.

RESOLVED: That these ideas be explored further at a future meeting.

### **07 42 Competitions and Awards**

The results of the Photographic Competition were reported to the Committee, and a link to a page drafted for the website would be sent to all Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED: (1) That after the next Council meeting a news article about the entries be placed on the website

(2) That the Clerk be asked to draw the necessary prizewinner's cheque in readiness for the presentation ceremony

(3) That the Chairman of the Council be asked to present the prize to the winner at the site of the winning photograph, and that he make the necessary arrangements with the Editor of the newsletter for such an occasion.

### **07 43 A Week of Communication**

RESOLVED: That further consideration of this item be deferred for the time being.

### **07 44 Meeting arrangements**

Cllr. Greenwood, as new Chairman of the Committee, indicated that he had difficulty in attending meetings at the current scheduled time and dates, and asked Members to consider rescheduling the remaining meetings for the current civic year.

Given the discussions at the present meeting which had agreed probable content for the next newsletter and various website issues, it was

RESOLVED: (1) That the meeting of the Publications and Communications Meeting scheduled for 21 January 2008 be cancelled

(2) That the meeting scheduled for 21 April 2008 be re-arranged for 16 April 2008 at 5.00

Holme Valley Parish Council

pm

(3) That if the Chairman and Editor feel that a further meeting is necessary before the above date, the Clerk be asked to arrange a suitable date for such a meeting.

It was also noted that an appropriate alteration should be made to the information on the website for Chairmanship of the Committee.

**07 45 Freedom of Information Act 2000**

(1) The Clerk reported that, following the recent news about the loss of Child Benefit data, she had received an Access to Information request, upon which she had acted in consultation with the Editor of the Newsletter. The recipient had responded indicating her satisfaction with the information received and the action taken. It was agreed that if similar requests were received, similar action should be taken but that the Council's position might have to be re-considered for the future.

RESOLVED: That the action taken by the Clerk be approved and the action taken followed for any similar requests received, unless this becomes a significant issue.

(2) RESOLVED: That, under the Council's Publication Scheme supporting papers for any item within the public session of the meeting be made available, if requested, after approval of the minutes by the full Council.

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**Chairman**